

## VISION 2020 FISCAL RESOURCES TASK GROUP

Meeting Minutes 10/15/15

Senior Center First Floor Conference Room

ATTENDEES: Gordon Jamieson (Co-Chair), David Garbarino (Co-Chair), Heather Remoff, Brian Hasbrouck, Pete Howard (Secretary),

### REVIEW OF FISCAL RESOURCE TOWN GOAL

We value Arlington's efficient delivery of public services providing for the common good. The benefits from these services and the responsibility of taxation will be equitably distributed among us. We will be known for our sound fiscal planning and for the thoughtful, open process by which realistic choices are made in our Town.

After a brief discussion all agreed that this statement covered what we have done & want to do.

### PROJECTS FOR 2015-2016

Should the Long Range Planning Committee and the Budget & Revenue Task Force be regularized? Should membership be established, meetings and agendas advertised, minutes published? Important agreements are reached at these meetings and the budget is affected. Agreed to write a letter to Town Council requesting an opinion with copies to Chair BoS, Town Manager

Should retired teachers have a say in the management of the OPEB fund? Perhaps the teachers should have representation on the CRB. Currently CRB, elected by the non-teacher retirees, manages this fund. We need to find out if monies from this fund are being spent. Agreed to write a letter to the Teachers union with copies to the Treasurer & Town Manager requesting an opinion.

EFT payments by residents for Town bills. The Treasurer charges the resident/tax payer a fee for each payment. Perhaps the Town could appropriate funds to cover these fees for a year to see if savings in the Treasurer's office would be sufficient to cover these fees in future years. Perhaps the fees could be waived only on bills paid promptly with savings on the cost of short term borrowing.

What is the policy for reappointing members of the Finance Committee and the Capital Planning Committee? What are the pros & cons of the existing policy? What about alternate policies?

Commercial properties will be reassessed this year. What is the result? FRTG members to attend the BoS tax rate setting meeting.

Can we use the True Story Theater to educate the public about the Town's fiscal organization?

Are the emergency calls distributed uniformly across the fire department's first response engines?

Real estate owned by non-profits is tax free. Should these organizations receive free trash pickup as well as tax-free water?

Added during minutes review: Cost and penalty policy for commercial pay as you throw program. Cost metric .. Penalties .. Enforcement.

### NEW BUSINESS

Heather provided copies (Ref 2) of a NY Times discussion of the property tax. The article is brief, clear and inclusive.

NEXT MEETING: Nov 19 - Meetings monthly - 3rd Thursdays 7:30 PM – Usually in Senior Center

Ref 1 FRTG Town Day Handout

Ref 2 The Inevitable Indispensable Property Tax